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MONTANA LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL

Organization, Overview, and Staff Directory

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MONTANA LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL:
Organization, Overview, and Staff Directory

Introduction and History

Established in 1957, the Montana Legislative Council was originally created by the Legislature as a permanent agency of the Legislative Branch of state government to provide information and study selected problems confronting the Legislature in the interim between biennial sessions. Since then, the Legislature has added to the Council's duties and responsibilities in a variety of areas.

Title 5, chapters 5, 6, and 11, and Title 1, chapter 11, MCA, provide the statutory authority for the structure and functions of the Legislative Council and interim committees. The content of these chapters may be divided into four areas: first, the powers and duties of the Council; second, the structure and responsibilities of the Council staff; third, interim committee organization and procedures; and fourth, the operation of the legislative intern program.

Agency Organization

The Legislative Council staff works under the general supervision of an eight-member bipartisan committee composed of four members of the House of Representatives and four members of the Senate. The staff is organized into four functional divisions as specified in 5-11-112, MCA: the Management and Business Services Division, the Research and Reference Services Division, the Legal Services Division, and the Legislative Services Division. Two additional units are activated during a legislative session: the Legislative Information Office and Legislative Printing and Distribution.

The Management and Business Services Division includes management, purchasing, publication distribution, financial, and personnel functions. Personnel of the division maintain all

bookkeeping records; process claims and payrolls for the Legislature as well as the office; and requisition printing, supplies, and equipment for the Legislative Council, the House, and the Senate.

Document distribution involves coordination with printing contractors and development and maintenance of customer data bases to control distribution, billing, collections, and accounting for publications in stock.

The Research and Reference Services Division and the Legal Services Division share many of the same responsibilities. Both divisions perform general and specialized research, reference, and information functions. Staff members from both divisions staff legislative committees during the session and throughout the interim, draft legislation, prepare legislative and staff reports, and provide information on the legislative process to the public.

The Research and Reference Services Division has primary responsibility for staffing interim committees and providing reference services.

The Research and Reference Services Division also maintains a reference library containing items of special interest to legislators and legislative staff. The library maintains a liaison with other libraries to help make information available as quickly as possible.

The Legal Services Division provides staff support for the Administrative Code Committee in its function of reviewing all Executive Branch rules, reviews all proposed ballot measures for conformity with the Legislative Council Bill Drafting Manual, and provides legal counseling to legislators on issues of state law.

A staff of copy editors in the Legal Services Division helps maintain high quality in Legislative Council documents and publications.

A two-person indexing staff provides services in support of the Legislative Services Division's responsibilities. The indexers produce an index to the Montana Code Annotated, as well as the subject index for all bills introduced during a legislative session, the Journal Index, the Legislative Review Index, the Session Law Index, the Bill Drafting Manual Index, the Combined Final Status Index, and the Legislative Rules Index. The major published indexes are updated during and after each legislative session.

The Code Commissioner, who currently is also the Legal Services Director, supervises the continuing codification, indexing, rearranging, and general updating of the text and annotations of the Montana Code Annotated. During the interim, publication and updating of the Montana Code Annotated is a primary responsibility of the Legal Services Division. Codification is a consuming task for the Code Commissioner, the Legal Services staff, and the Legislative Services staff immediately following a legislative session. Annotations, including case notes to federal and state court decisions and other materials useful to MCA users, are published separately from the section text in a booklet format that may be easily updated. The preparation of annotations text is a continuing interim responsibility.

The Legislative Services Division is responsible for the final preparation of Legislative Council documents; for secretarial support for the office, including reception services; and for computer system support for the Council, the Legislative Branch, and the Legislature.

Final document preparation includes clerical preparation of introduced bills, engrossing and enrolling of bills, final preparation of letters and reports, operation of computer graphics programs, preparation of camera-ready copy for numerous publications, and maintenance of data bases used for these purposes.

Division secretaries support interim committee meetings through document preparation, composition of minutes, and maintenance of committee files.

The Division uses computerized word processing and data base management systems to operate with a high degree of effectiveness and accuracy with a small staff of word processing operators, secretaries, and proofreaders. Publication of the text and annotations for the Montana Code Annotated, bill draft request report, Rules of the Montana Legislature, code sections affected list, daily bill status, Combined Final Status, and Session Laws are Division responsibilities. Division staff has developed and maintains the system used to display bill status and other legislative information online during the session.

A group of systems analysts and programmer/analysts within the Division play a key role in developing and maintaining the systems and applications used to support document processing activities, as well as in planning and implementing office automation activities for the Legislative Council, the Legislative Branch, and the Legislature--an area of demand that has maintained constant growth. Approval of the Legislative Branch network plan appropriation by the Legislature in 1991 added responsibility for central Legislative Branch computer network management.

Legislative Printing and Distribution, which is activated just

prior to a legislative session, has two separate functions. The distribution center distributes bills, amendments, resolutions, indexes, daily status, rules, and journals to legislators, state agencies, lobbyists, and other subscribers to the legislative proceedings. Daily mailings of the proceedings are made to the 56 County Clerk and Recorders and 12 depository libraries in the state. The print shop staff orders all printing, sets priorities on the printing, prints the material, and delivers printed proceedings to the House and Senate bill distribution offices.

During a legislative session, the **Legislative Information Office** is in operation in the Capitol Rotunda. The office is established just prior to a legislative session, operates 6 days a week during session, and provides legislative information to the public and to the many Capitol visitors. The office assists in preparation of the Legislative Telephone Directory. The Legislative Information Office also distributes the Legislative Rules, daily committee hearing calendars, information available through the computerized information system, daily second- and third-reading agendas for the House and Senate, seating charts, and other relevant materials.

Agency Programs

Agency activities have been organized into three programs.

The "Feed Bill Program" is funded each session through a bill appropriating money for the operation of the Legislature, including legislative information, bill printing and distribution, legislative publications, and legislative telephone services.

The Interim Studies and Conferences Program and the Legislative Council Operations Program are discussed at length beginning on page 12.

LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL STAFF

ROOM 138

Bob Person	Executive Director
Amy Clark	Accounting Supervisor
Ellen Garrity	Secretary/Data Entry
Marsha Sager	Receptionist/Information Officer
Kevin Hayes	Distribution and Procurement Officer

ROOM 52

David Niss	Attorney

ROOM 101

Gregg Wheeler	Network Manager
Jeanette Rushford	Network Administrator
Gerald Churchill	Network Support Specialist

ROOM 102

Beth Furbush	Research Librarian
Dianna Miller	Library Clerk

ROOM 115

Mary Ellen Randall	Chief Editor
Sally Bush-Arrigo	Editor
Carol Ann Jacobsen	Editor

ROOM 117

Greg Petesch	Legal Services Director
Bart Campbell	Attorney
Lee Heiman	Attorney
Valencia Lane	Attorney
John MacMaster	Attorney
Eddye McClure	Attorney
Doug Sternberg	Legal Researcher

ROOM 118

Ann Patten	Operations Bureau Chief
Martin Baumann	Data Entry

ROOM 119

Hank Trenk	Legislative Services Director
Tom Mulvaney	Systems Analyst
Glenn Ruckdashel	Programmer/Analyst

ROOM 139

Jesse Northerner	Proofreader

ROOM 140

Dave Bohyer	Research & Reference Services Director
Connie Erickson	Researcher
Susan Byorth Fox	Researcher
Sheri Heffelfinger	Researcher
Stephen Maly	Researcher
Jeff Martin	Researcher
Andrea Merrill	Researcher
Lois O'Connor	Secretary/Data Entry

ROOM 234

Nadine Wallace	Chief Indexer
Tracy Wortman	Indexer

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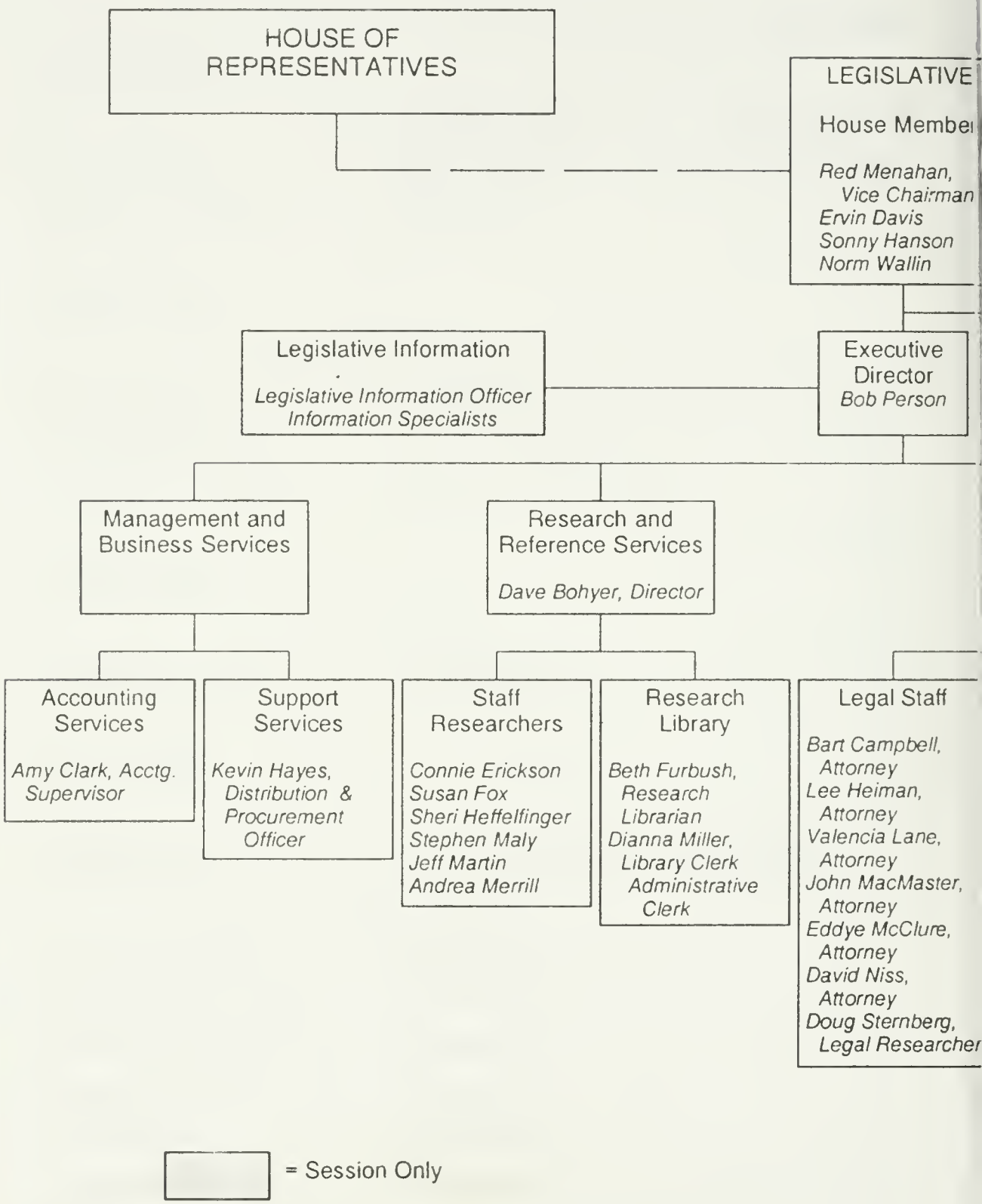

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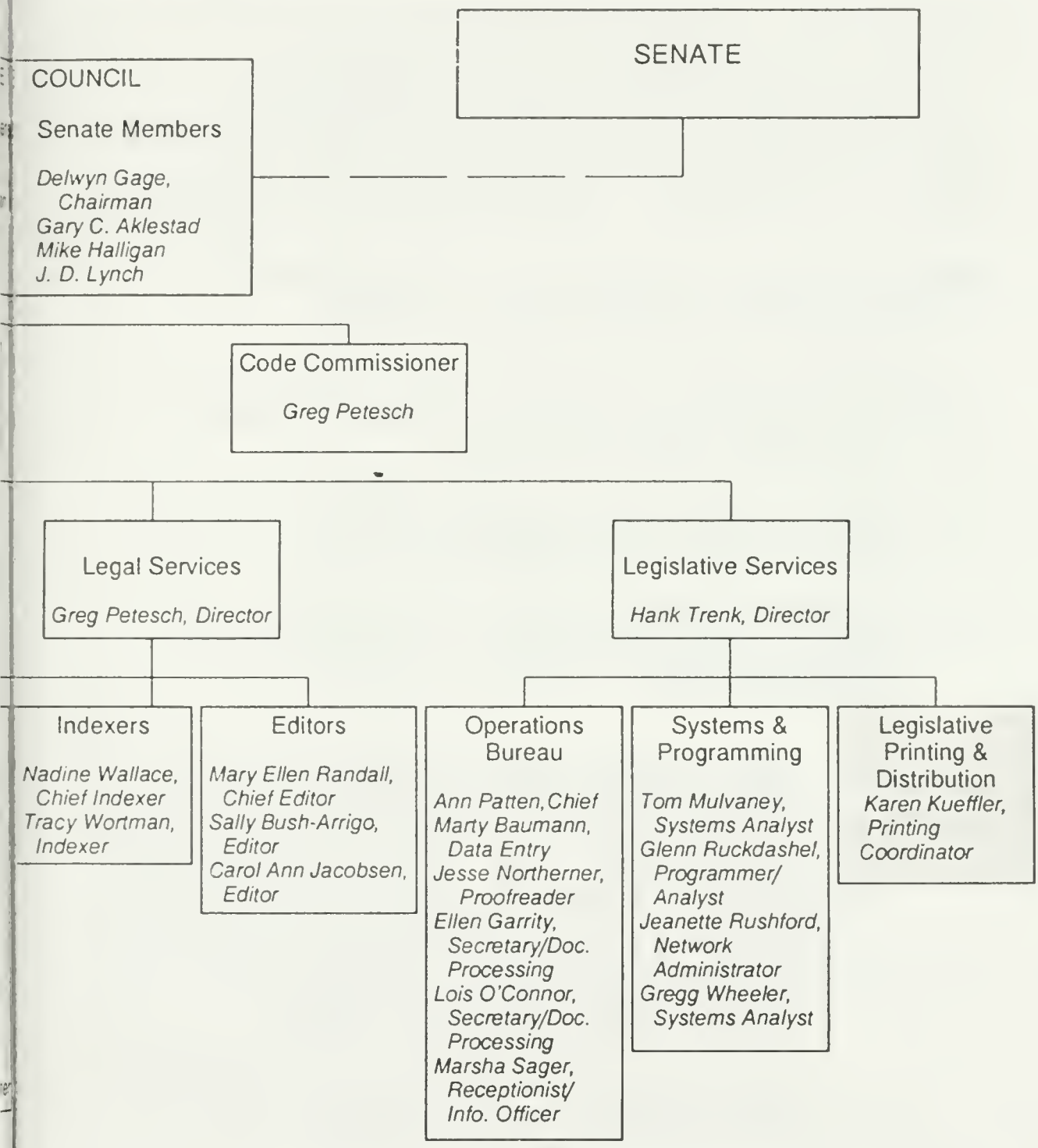

Interim Studies and Conferences Program

The Interim Studies and Conferences Program exists to process and monitor the expenditures of the various legislative interim committees and conferences. The program has a technical component and a policy component. The technical component represents the service provided by the office in support of the policy component, i.e., the Legislature's purposes for activities supported by the program.

The Interim Studies and Conferences Program typically includes the following functions, which change frequently based on legislative needs and decisions:

(1) **interim studies activities** established under 5-5-202 and 5-5-211 through 5-5-217, MCA.

(2) **interstate cooperation activities** of the Legislature, as broadly authorized under 5-11-301, MCA, which typically include:

(a) **Council of State Governments/Western Legislative Conference**, which was founded in the 1930s to enhance interstate cooperation and sharing of information. Section 5-11-301, MCA, specifically assigns the Legislative Council the function of carrying forward the participation of the State of Montana as a member of the Council of State Governments. Neither membership in nor legislator travel for Council of State Governments activities was funded for the 1993 biennium.

(b) **National Conference of State Legislatures**, which was formed in 1975 from three separate

legislative organizations to improve the quality and effectiveness of state Legislatures, foster interstate communication and cooperation, and ensure Legislatures a strong, cohesive voice in the federal system.

(c) **Montana-Western Canadian Provinces Boundary Advisory Committee**, which was created in 1985 and operates under Title 1, chapter 13, part 1, MCA. The Committee's mission is to strengthen understanding and cooperation between Montana government and citizens and the governments and citizens of the neighboring Canadian provinces, with special emphasis on encouraging economic, cultural, and educational exchanges. The Committee is authorized to meet with an appropriate body representing the provinces of Alberta, British Columbia, and Saskatchewan.

(d) **Pacific Northwest Economic Region**, which was established in 1991 and operates under Title 5, chapter 11, part 7, MCA, is charged with promoting collaboration on the economic activities of the region, enhancing the competitiveness of the region's products, and improving the economic well-being and quality of life of the region's citizens.

(e) **National Conference of Commissioners on Uniform State Laws**, which was established in 1892 to promote uniformity of law among the states in areas in which uniformity was desirable. Funding for Commissioner participation was included in the Legislative

Council budget by the Legislature in 1991. It had been included in the budget for the Governor's Office for a number of previous bienniums. Full responsibility for Montana activities was assigned to the Legislative Council in 1993.

(3) **other legislative activities** for which appropriations are made that typically include:

(a) **Administrative Code Committee**, which was established in 1975 as a permanent joint committee to review all proposed rules, rule amendments, and rule repeals filed with the Secretary of State under the Montana Administrative Procedure Act (Title 2, chapter 4, MCA). The powers of the Committee are set forth in Title 2, chapter 4, part 4, MCA.

(b) **Revenue Oversight Committee**, which was created in 1979 to review proposed rules of the Department of Revenue and exercise legislative oversight of that Department. The Committee also investigates and reports on any other matters concerning taxation, serving essentially as the interim legislative committee on taxation. The Committee operates under Title 5, chapter 18, part 1, MCA.

(c) **Committee on Indian Affairs**, which has operated under legislative authorization from session to session since 1977 and under permanent statute since 1989 under Title 5, chapter 19, part 1, MCA. The Committee is directed to encourage

participation of Indian people at committee meetings, to act as a liaison between the Indian people and the Legislature, to encourage tribal-state and tribal-local government cooperation, and to hold hearings to promote better understanding between the tribes and public agencies.

(d) **Subcommittee on JTPA,** which was established in 1989 by 53-2-1110, MCA, to review and comment upon the job training plan written under 53-2-1106, MCA.

(e) **Districting and Apportionment Commission** as required by Title 5, chapter 1, part 1, MCA. The Commission, which completed its work in the spring of 1993, will not require funding again until the 2001 biennium.

Legislative Council Operations Program

The Legislative Council Operations Program provides for overall policy direction of the agency through the Legislative Council. The program also provides the personnel required to support the programs and activities of the agency, including an Executive Director and other personnel that are necessary to assist in the preparation of proposed legislation and standing and select committee and subcommittee reports and recommendations and to carry out other Council activities. With program reorganization completed in the 1993 biennium, the Operations Program also supports the publication and distribution of the Montana Code Annotated statute text, annotations, and ancillary publications issued under 1-11-301 and 1-11-303, MCA, and supports the provision of reimbursable services provided by the Council staff.

Services for which the program is responsible include the responsibility to:

(1) provide library reference services to the Legislature, the Council staff, and other legislative agencies and, to a limited degree, to other state agencies and individuals;

(2) provide limited research, legal analysis, and reference services in response to legislative requests, requests from other states, and interstate agencies;

(3) provide information in response to requests from the public about the Legislature, statutes, and state government;

(4) draft bills for legislators and legislative committees;

(5) support legislative needs as requested by the Legislature through leadership, committees, and committee chairpersons;

(6) provide research, legal, and organizational support to interim legislative committees within the limits of staff availability;

(7) accomplish the duties assigned to the Code Commissioner in 1-11-204, MCA, effectively and efficiently;

(8) review proposed ballot issues in accordance with the requirements of 13-27-202, MCA;

(9) support the production, engrossing, and enrolling of bills and the production of journals, bill status reports, and publications indexes, using appropriate personnel and technologies to achieve the timely and accurate production of legislative documents and information;

(10) publish and distribute the Montana Code Annotated statute text prior to October 1 following a regular legislative session;

(11) publish accurate updates to the annotations to the Montana Code Annotated once each biennium;

(12) publish Montana Code Annotated publications in an attractive and useful format that is economical and acceptable to a majority of the subscribers;

(13) provide automated search services of the Montana Code Annotated data bases and production of camera-ready copy from those data bases on a cost-reimbursable basis;

(14) support subscriptions to a newsletter that reports interim legislative activities, planned meetings, and other legislative news;

(15) support the provision of copy services for the dissemination of copies of legislative information and miscellaneous other services at a price that reflects cost;

(16) provide accounting, payroll, and purchasing services to the Legislative Council and the Legislature;

(17) operate the Legislative Intern Program in such a way as to meet the requirements of Title 5, chapter 6, part 1, MCA; and

(18) plan, coordinate, install, operate, and maintain network file servers and selected related network services for the Legislative Branch.

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